



## Unused Rental Assistance

The USDA Rural Development National Office is looking at properties with unused Rental Assistance. Please make sure all properties are utilizing their Rental Assistance.

From the Area Director

## Hurricane Ivan

Because of Hurricane Ivan, the Amite Area Office contacted various public officials and borrowers to assess damages in our service area. Louisiana was very lucky! Initial reports from hardest hit parishes are encouraging. Only minor damages were sustained in St. Bernard, Louisiana—a complex lost a few shingles and an old fence. Plaquemines Parish encountered sustained winds of over 100 mph, and areas of the parish may have suffered some damage. St. Tammany Parish seems to have been spared. All Amite Area Office employees reported no problems or damages. I hope you survived Hurricane Ivan with little or no damage. If you did have damage to your property, please report your damages to the Amite Area Office.

**Sean Le Blanc**

Area Director  
Amite Area Office  
USDA Rural Development

## Training

Our office recently received training from our State Office on civil rights issues, budgets, and annual reports. There were many discussions on the changes ahead with the publication of the new regulations for the Multi-Family Housing Programs—but until the regulations are published, we will continue to service our loans according to our current procedure. We will keep you updated on any changes.

## Reminder on Rent Increases

If you are proposing a rent increase, you will need to change the rents on your current Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Plan, initial the form, and submit to our office by January 1, 2005.

## New Regulations/ Handbook

The new regulations for the Multi-Family Housing Programs should be out soon. The Federal Register published the date for publication as September 30th. There will be a comment period of 30 days. This will be the last chance for comments or changes before final publication. The new regulations will be renumbered to the 3560 series. We will keep borrowers posted on any changes.

## New Affirmative Fair Housing Plan

The Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Plan (AFHMP) form was revised in November 2003. You should begin using the new

form immediately. A letter was mailed to all management companies on July 21, 2004, advising of the changes to the form. Call our office if you have any questions.

The AFHMP form is available on HUD's website:  
<http://www.hudclips.org/>  
Click - "Forms"  
Scroll down page to - "Enter a Word or Phrase" and enter "Affirmative"  
Click - "Search Database"  
The form is fillable.

## Visit Our Office

Amite Area Office  
USDA Service Center  
805 West Oak Street  
Room 3  
Amite, Louisiana 70422  
Telephone: (985) 748-8751  
Fax: (985) 748-4940



# FYI

(for your information)

## Annual Rural Rental Housing Meeting - December 7-8

Make your reservations early for the Annual Rural Rental Housing Meeting to be held December 7-8, 2004, in Alexandria, Louisiana. Contact Juliet Schillings at (985) 748-8751 for more information.

### Management Interactive Network Connection (MINC) System

Participation continues to be voluntary at this time for borrowers/management companies for the Management Interactive Network Connection (MINC) System. However, it will soon be required for all borrowers with eight units or more to participate. The MINC system is only an upgrade to the Industry Interface. Borrower/management companies need only one identification number, instead of one for every property.

### Payments

There is now an upgrade to our payment system. You will no longer be required to submit Project Worksheets through the mail. You will view your Project Worksheets through the Management Interactive Network Connection (MINC) System. Once you have approved your Project Worksheet, information will be transferred to our Automated Multi-Housing Accounting System (AMAS) system (unless discrepancies are identified). Borrowers can elect to use the Preauthorized Debt (PAD). If not, our servicing office/state office will process the payments. A letter was mailed September 23, 2004, to all borrowers/management companies with instructions on how to sign up for PAD. This new payment system will become effective October 13, 2004.

### Benefits of Preauthorized Debits (PAD)

1. Borrower will be able to control the date and amount that Rural Development will debit from their bank account.
2. Eliminates late fees
3. Eliminates lost checks
4. Saves postage expense
5. Eliminates paper check writing
6. Convenient

### Waiting List and Applications Check this information!

Make sure your waiting list and applications have the ethnicity section completed. All applicants will be asked to make two choices: "What is your ethnicity (national origin)?" and "What is your race?" The applicant should provide an answer to both questions (i.e., Hispanic and African American).

### E-Mail Project Worksheets

If you would like the project worksheets to be e-mailed to your office until the new payment system goes into effect, contact our office with an e-mail address. You will need Adobe Acrobat downloaded/installed on your computer in order to access these worksheets.

### Contact Us

Our office e-mail addresses are as follows:

**Juliet Schillings:**

[juiet.schillings@la.usda.gov](mailto:juiet.schillings@la.usda.gov)

**Mary LaMarca:**

[mary.lamarca@la.usda.gov](mailto:mary.lamarca@la.usda.gov)

**Kim Martin:**

[kim.martin@la.usda.gov](mailto:kim.martin@la.usda.gov)

**Melissa Thompson:**

[melissa.thompson@la.usda.gov](mailto:melissa.thompson@la.usda.gov)



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal employment opportunity lender, provider, and employer.